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# Mr. *Pollen*'s

# SERMON,

Preached before the

Right Worſhipful LODGE

OF

Free and Accepted MASONS

At *NEWPORT.*

BRITISH MUSEUM

*Universal Love.*

A

# SERMON

Preached in

Trinity-Church, at *Newport*, in *Rhode-Island*,

Before the Right Worshipful LODGE

OF

Free and Accepted

# *MASONS*,

On the 24th Day of *June*, 1757.

By *Thomas Pollen*, A.M.

*BOSTON; NEW-ENGLAND:*

Printed by GREEN and RUSSELL in *Queen-street*,
for J. and T. LEVERETT, in *Cornhill*.
MDCCLVIII.

*At the* LODGE *in* Newport, *June* 24th, 1757.

*VOTED,*

THAT the Worſhipful *Benjamin Maſon,* Treaſurer, our Brothers *Samuel Brenton, Thomas Vernon* and *Edward Cole,* be a Committee to wait on our Brother the Rev'd Mr. *Thomas Pollen,* and return him the Thanks of this SOCIETY for his SERMON preached this Day before them, and requeſt of him a Copy for the Preſs.

Atteſt,

*Nathaniel Mumford,* Secretary.

To the Right Worſhipful

*ROBERT JENKINS,*

MASTER;

*ALEXANDER GRANT*

AND

*JOHN MAWDSLEY,*

WARDENS:

And the Brothers of the Right Worſhipful LODGE

OF

Free and Accepted *MASONS*

at *Newport* :

This SERMON,

Preach'd and Publiſh'd at their Requeſt, is

*DEDICATED,*

By their moſt affectionate Brother,

and humble Servant,

*Thomas Pollen.*

*At a* GRAND LODGE, *Held at the* Exchange Tavern, *in* BOSTON, *on* FRIDAY *the* 13th *Day of* JANUARY, 1758.

Unanimouſly Voted,

THAT the SERMON of our Reverend Brother, THOMAS POLLEN, Preached before the Right Worſhipful LODGE of FREE AND ACCEPTED *MASONS*, at *Newport* in *Rhode-Iſland*, on the 24th Day of *June* laſt, be Printed.

Atteſt,

*John Leverett*, G.S.

# Univerſal Love.

## 1 John IV. 7.

*Beloved, let us love one another.*

THIS was the exhortation of that *diſciple whom Jeſus loved*; and who having imbibed the ſpirit of love which his bleſſed maſter had ſo largely poured out to him, did afterwards himſelf breath forth almoſt nothing elſe in this and his other Epiſtles. Doubtleſs he thereby intended that it might ſpread itſelf throughout the world. And God who then guided the Pen of this moſt benevolent writer, had intended the ſame from the very beginning: For tho' our Lord juſtly ſtiles it in a figurative Senſe * *a new com-*

* John xiii. 34.

*commandment, that* we *love one another,* yet if taken literally, it is as old as the world itſelf. It was firſt given to the whole people of God, at leaſt by the voice of nature, and afterwards to his peculiar people the *Jews*, by the voice both of nature and revelation : But they had confin'd their obedience to it within too narrow bounds in many reſpects, and particularly in reſpect to its object. Our Lord therefore who came to renew the divine commandments which had, as it were, grown obſolete through their abuſe of them, renew'd this of loving one another, and carried it's object, as God had firſt intended it, to all mankind. This he did by commanding us to look upon every man breathing as our * *neighbour*, and to *love* him as ourſelves : Wherefore this loving of one another may be properly call'd univerſal love ; which I ſhall now recommend to your meditation and practice.

We may obſerve, that the commandment expreſly given to man juſt after his creation was, † *be fruitful and multiply* ; and that the commandment expreſly given to man juſt before his redemption was, § *love one another.* Theſe two commandments plainly intimate, that

* Luk. x. 27, &c. † Gen. i. 28. § John xiii. 34.

that man was neither created nor redeem'd only for himſelf: For if it had been ſo, it might probably have been ſaid to him, juſt after his creation, *multiply not, but enjoy alone this world, and all that is therein*; or juſt before his redemption, *love thy ſelf alone, and not another.* Indeed to love ourſelves has been at no time (that I can remember) expreſly commanded us; becauſe the divine lawgiver knows full well, that we ſhall hardly be deficient in that part of our duty. When therefore he commands us to * *love* our *neighbour* as ourſelves, he propoſes our love of ourſelves as a rule whereby to meaſure our love of our neighbour. *For* † *no man,* as St. *Paul* ſays, *ever yet hated his own fleſh, but nouriſheth it and cheriſheth it.* Nay he has made our love of our brother, the teſt of our love of himſelf. For St. *John* through his direction thus reaſons, †† *He that loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen?* And then he proceeds to tell us, that, *This commandment have we from him,* § *That he who loveth God, love his brother alſo.* Hence we may conclude, that we §§ *ourſelves are taught of God to love one another.*



* Lev. xix. 18. † Epheſ. v. 29. †† 1 Joh. iv. 20.
§ ver. 21. §§ 1 Theſſ. iv. 9.

And what he has taught, he has alſo enforc'd by his own example. It was through the principle of univerſal love that God made the world, and that his * *ſpirit moving upon the face of the waters;* gave it not only motion, but order, beauty, light, and life. As God was perfectly happy in himſelf, he needed not to make a world that it might render him more ſo. It was therefore pure diſintereſted love that prompted him to bring forth this great ſomething out of nothing.

It is through the principle of univerſal love that God preſerves the world. Inſomuch that was this divine principle to withdraw its influence but for a moment, the world would drop into the womb of nothing out of which it was brought forth. † *God is love,* and every particle of it is a ray of his divinity. We may therefore aſſert without prophaneneſs that § *in* love, the world *lives and moves, and has* its *being.*

It was through the principle of univerſal love that God redeem'd the world. It might have been reaſonably expected that if, after he had through love firſt made and then preſerv'd the world, man for whoſe ſake

* Gen. i. 2. † 1 John iv. 16. § Acts xvii. 28.

ſake chiefly he had made and preſerv'd it, had prov'd unthankful for thoſe his benefits, his love would have fled from it, and left it to be deſtroy'd by his hate. But his love ſtill remain'd, and found a way to redeem man from eternal, and for his ſake the world to this day, from temporal deſtruction.

Thus we find that God has enforc'd this leſſon he has taught of acting through the principle of univerſal love by his own example. And the great uſe of men's acting through this principle will appear if we farther conſider, that,

It was through the principle of univerſal love, as well as of neceſſity, that men form'd themſelves into ſociety. And that true ſociableneſs which may be diſcover'd among generous and honeſt men is a part of this principle. Univerſal love was at firſt implanted in human nature, on purpoſe to draw by its magnetic virtue all men to one centre, the common good. It muſt be confeſs'd, that the principle of ſelf-love has often interpos'd, and drawn them a quite contrary way. So that from ſocial creatures born for each other's ſupport and comfort, ſome men are become as beaſts of prey, *biting*

*and*

*and devouring one another.* But ſtill it is to be hop'd, the former principle like *Truth, is great, and will prevail.*

And as it was through the principle of univerſal love that men form'd themſelves into ſociety, ſo it is this principle alone which, (under God's Providence) can keep any ſociety whatever from being diſſolv'd. Even chriſtianity itſelf, that moſt perfect ſociety of all, that *building* of God ſo *fitly framed together*, is upheld by the cement of univerſal love. For otherwiſe, crack'd and divided, as it is into ſo many Parts, which bear ſo little connection with one another, it would ſoon fall aſunder, and be, as was the firſt matter, *without form and void.* We may then look upon ſociety to be one grand machine, conſiſting of many reſources both great and ſmall, which by a kind of reciprocal force, move and ſuſtain each other, but of which the maſter-one is univerſal love. While this continues ſtrong and active, thoſe continue ſo too. But as ſoon as this begins to fail, thoſe begin to fail likewiſe; till at laſt the whole becomes weak, irregular, and uſeleſs to all good purpoſes.

We

We ſee then how great a bleſſing univerſal love muſt be to any ſociety whatever. But moſt eſpecially where a monſtrous diverſity of religious tenets, a mad contention about little honours, a furious claſhing in worldly intereſts, and an unchriſtian enmity between rival families, are rending the very bowels of a ſociety in pieces, what greater bleſſing can deſcend from heaven upon it, than univerſal love *with healing in its wings?*

If we paſs from ſociety to particular men, we ſhall diſcover univerſal love even there to be as neceſſary as any where. Love when it is diſpens'd in due proportions, adminiſters health and ſafety to others, as well as to ourſelves. But when the whole ſpirit of it remains contracted within us, it is like the *poiſon of Aſps.* For however it may enliven and defend ourſelves, it carries with it a hurtful quality to others.

Nay in regard to ourſelves alſo, univerſal love while it darts forth its heavenly rays both far and near, not only ſhines the brighter and the ſtronger for it, but from the returns that are made it, receives back again into its orb a freſh ſupply of light and heat: Whereas ſelf-love burns inward, like a ſullen fire; neither heats, nor is heated, neither ſhines, nor is ſhin'd upon. Univerſal

verſal love feels a pleaſure, which ſelf-love has not the leaſt conception of. Self-love is always mix'd with a dogged humour, which makes us feel no pleaſure in others, and no true one in overſelves. But univerſal love keeps us always pleas'd both with ourſelves and others. Hence it delights to ſpread its wings abroad in the world, and like *Noah*'s *dove*, as ſoon as it meets with a reception there, diſdains any longer to hover about the confines of a wooden manſion.

And now, I preſume, I need not expreſly declare, that the occaſion of my recommending univerſal love at preſent, in terms ſo high (though not ſo high perhaps as it deſerves) is this days aſſembling together of a ſociety, the badge of whoſe profeſſion is to promote it in the world. And that this ſociety has a direct tendency towards doing ſo, ye may be abundantly ſatisfied, if ye compare it with ſome other ſocieties.

Some other ſocieties are founded meerly upon ſelf-intereſt: And each member of them ſo far and no farther, conſults the intereſt of the reſt, than as it coincides with his own. But this ſociety is founded upon a nobler plan; the very ſame as that of the greateſt and beſt

beſt ſociety that ever was, and ever will be upon earth, *viz.* the chriſtian. For the very ſame inſcription is required to be written in the heart of each member of the former, as of the latter, * *look not every man on his own things, but every man alſo on the things of others.*

Some other ſocieties receive among them, men of one nation only; which is apt to create a monopolizing ſpirit, ſo prejudicial to the good of mankind in general, and even of that one nation in particular. But this ſociety opens wide its arms to every nation under heaven, and offers to take in both *Jews and Greeks*, both *Cretes and Arabians*; following the ſteps of their maſter Chriſt, whoſe deſign was in that bleſſed ſociety himſelf inſtituted, to make *all the kindreds of the earth become one people.*

Some other ſocieties, eſpecially when grown numerous, oftentimes diſturb and divide the country under whoſe protection they ſubſiſt, by framing a conſtitution which interferes with that of the country itſelf, or by ſetting up ſome new party therein. But this ſociety has

* Phil. ii. 4.

has fram'd a conſtitution ſo happily calculated, as exactly to ſquare with the beſt conſtitutions of all the countries in the univerſe; and religiouſly obſerves to be of no party at all. Wherefore it is ſo far from diſturbing and dividing the country under whoſe protection it ſubſiſts, that it contributes not a little to infuſe throughout it a ſpirit of peace and unity. For a proof of this I need only refer you to thoſe many countries ſo various in their policy, wherein it has of late years been not only ſuffer'd, but even encourag'd, to begin and to continue.

Notwithſtanding the truth of what I have advanc'd, many of them who are not initiated into the myſteries of this ſociety, if they do not peremptorily judge, yet too haſtily imagine it to be trifling at beſt. But however trifling they may imagine it to be, who imagine every thing to be ſo wherein their worldly intereſt is not immediately concern'd, yet ſurely men's † *aſſembling of themſelves together to provoke one another unto love and to good works*, is not ſo trifling.

Beſides, to enlarge the narrowneſs of men's underſtandings, to ſmooth the roughneſs of their wills, and to level the uneveneſs of their paſſions, is a moſt uſeful

† Heb. x. 24, 25.

ful undertaking, and hard to accompliſh. Yet I may ſafely appeal to any one who has been long a member of this ſociety, if he has not perceiv'd that undertaking to go on more proſperouſly in this, than in any other private ſociety he knows of; if the ſeveral members of it, however different in principle, temper or carriage, have not often-times parted wiſer men, truer friends, and better citizens, than they were before they met.

What I have ſaid will, I hope, be ſufficient to draw the eſteem of ſome to this ſociety, and remove the prejudice of others far off from it. And as to you, my brethren, the worthy members thereof, be not diſcourag'd at the ſmallneſs of your number, and the ſlowneſs of your progreſs. For, naturally ſpeaking, the ſpirit of univerſal love (which is, or ought to be the chief motive of men's deſire to come among you) cannot ſo eaſily find an entrance into thoſe breaſts, where the ſpirit of ſelf-love has ſtep'd in before it, and taken poſſeſſion. But who knows how ſoon the grace of God may chaſe away this evil ſpirit, and *your joy may be full?* In the mean time, *be not weary in well doing*

—*Love the brotherhood,* i. e. all mankind—First *let* this *love be without diſſimulation,* and then *let* it *continue.*—*Quench not the ſpirit* of it, *deſpiſe not* its ſuggeſtions. *Comfort yourſelves together, and edify one another, even as alſo ye do—Warn them that are unruly, ſupport the weak,* relieve the diſtreſt—*See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good, both among yourſelves and to all men—Keep* yourſelves *unſpotted from the world,* and *beware of covetouſneſs, which is idolatry—Cut off occaſion from them which deſire occaſion to ſpeak againſt you,* and let *your converſation* be ſuch, *that whereas they ſpeak againſt you as evil doers, they may by your good works which they ſhall behold, glorify God in the day of viſitation—Finally, brethren, whatſoever things are true, whatſoever things are honeſt, whatſoever things are juſt, whatſoever things are pure, whatſoever things are lovely, whatſoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praiſe, think on theſe things.*

Now to God the Father who is the * *builder and maker* of us all; to God the Son who is our § *chief corner-*

* Heb. xi. 10. § Eph. ii. 20.

*corner-ſtone*; and to God the Holy Ghoſt * *through whom we are builded together* be aſcribed as is moſt due, all power and glory both now and for ever. AMEN.

* Eph. ii. 22.

FINIS.

THE END